Vol. VI
of X

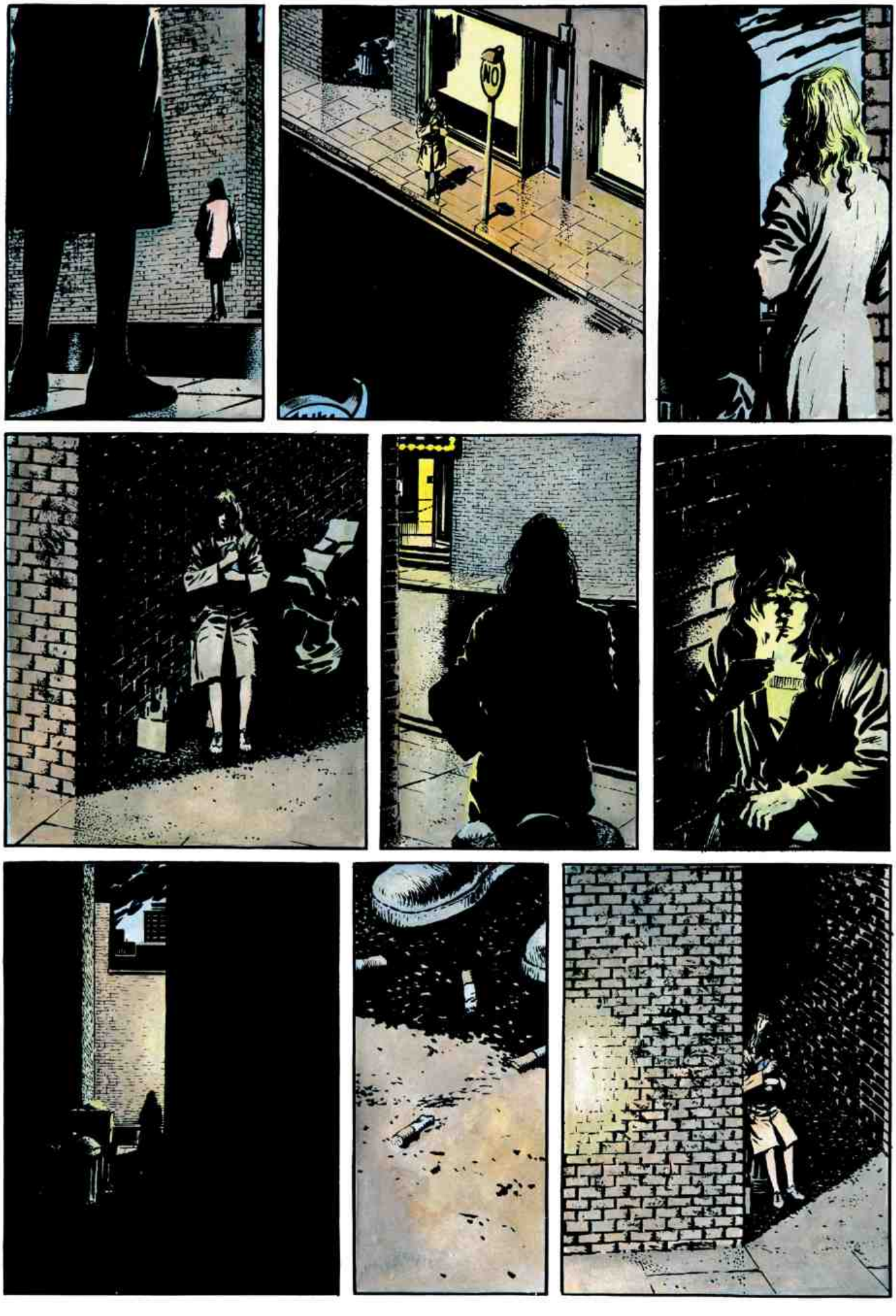
V FOR VENDETTA™

By **Alan Moore**
and **David Lloyd**

Suggested
For Mature
Readers

CHAPTER 8
VENGEANCE

NO, I DON'T KNOW WHERE IT IS. I'M SORRY. PERHAPS ROUND THE BACK...?
YOUR NAME'S ROSE, ISN'T IT?
YES, YES, THAT'S RIGHT.
UH, WELL, I'LL HAVE ANOTHER LOOK...


NO

EH, BOAB, Y' GETUM EN, EH?
EH, YIZZA TIGHT BASTUD, Y'LI'RE...
EH, GO AN.
CISSA PINTA HEAVY ANNA BABYCHAM FUH YISELF, EH?
AW PESSAWF, WIYA?
WHASSAMATTER, BOAB? WEH CELEBRATIN!
D'Y'NO FEEL LIKE CELEBRATIN OR WHA?
SPIKKIN FUH MASEL', AM GETTIN STEAMIN'...
...SO WHOOSA ONE WITHUH BEG TETS? EZZAT CAROLE?
NAW, THAS JEM'S BERD, WHASSANAME, DIYAAN...

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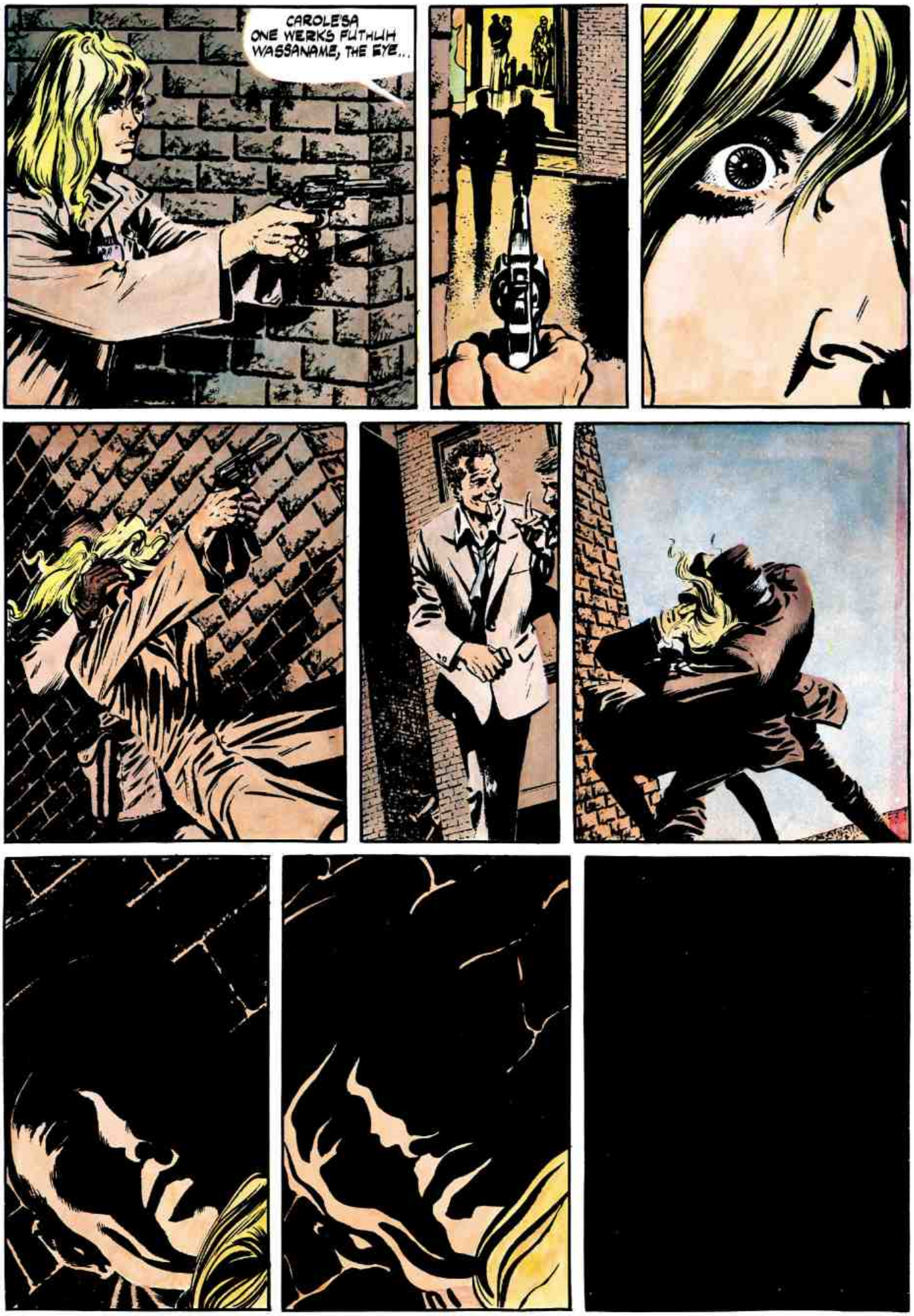

CAROLE'SA ONE WERKS FUTHUH WASSANAME, THE EYE...

THE AIR AROUND ME IS COMPLETELY BLACK. I THINK THAT PERHAPS I'M BACKSTAGE AT THE THEATRE, DURING THE INTERVAL.

THERE ARE MUFFLED BUMPINGS NEARBY. STAGE-HANDS ARE REARRANGING THE SCENERY.

I SMELL ROSES, AND THINK ABOUT THE SCENTED BIRTHDAY CARDS MY MOTHER FOUND IN A SHOE BOX AT OUR HOUSE ON SHOOTER'S HILL.

THE PETALS FALL, PENCIL SHAVINGS OF CREAM FLESH.

EVERYTHING CHANGES.

CHAPTER 9
VICISSITUDE

IT'S MY BIRTHDAY. I'M STILL IN THE THEATRE, BUT I KNOW THAT IT'S REALLY OUR OLD HOUSE.

I CAN HEAR A PARTY IN THE ROOM UPSTAIRS.

They're wicki-wack

ooing in Hawaii!

VALERIE PAGE
HE ROSE FOREST

I KNOW IT'S A BIRTHDAY PARTY, FOR ME, BUT I HAVE A SINKING FEELING THAT IT WILL BE OVER BY THE TIME I GET THERE.

THE BLACK SHADOWS OF THE PAST BRED THIS HALF-MAN HALF-DEMON

IT'S TAKING ME SO LONG TO GET READY.

Weird Than "Dracula"—
Than "Frankenstein"

WEDDING

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY I'M BOTHERING TO GET DRESSED UP LIKE THIS, BUT I FEEL AS IF IT'S EXPECTED OF ME.

I WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO. I WANT TO GO TO THE PARTY NOW.

EVEY?

YOU'RE MISSING THE PARTY. WE'VE HIRED A PUNCH AND JUDY MAN SPECIALLY...

I'M GLAD DAD COULD COME. HAVEN'T SEEN HIM MUCH SINCE I STARTED WORK AT THE MATCH FACTORY.

HE LEADS ME UPSTAIRS TO THE PARTY, AND I WONDER IF THIS IS OUR OLD HOUSE AFTER ALL.

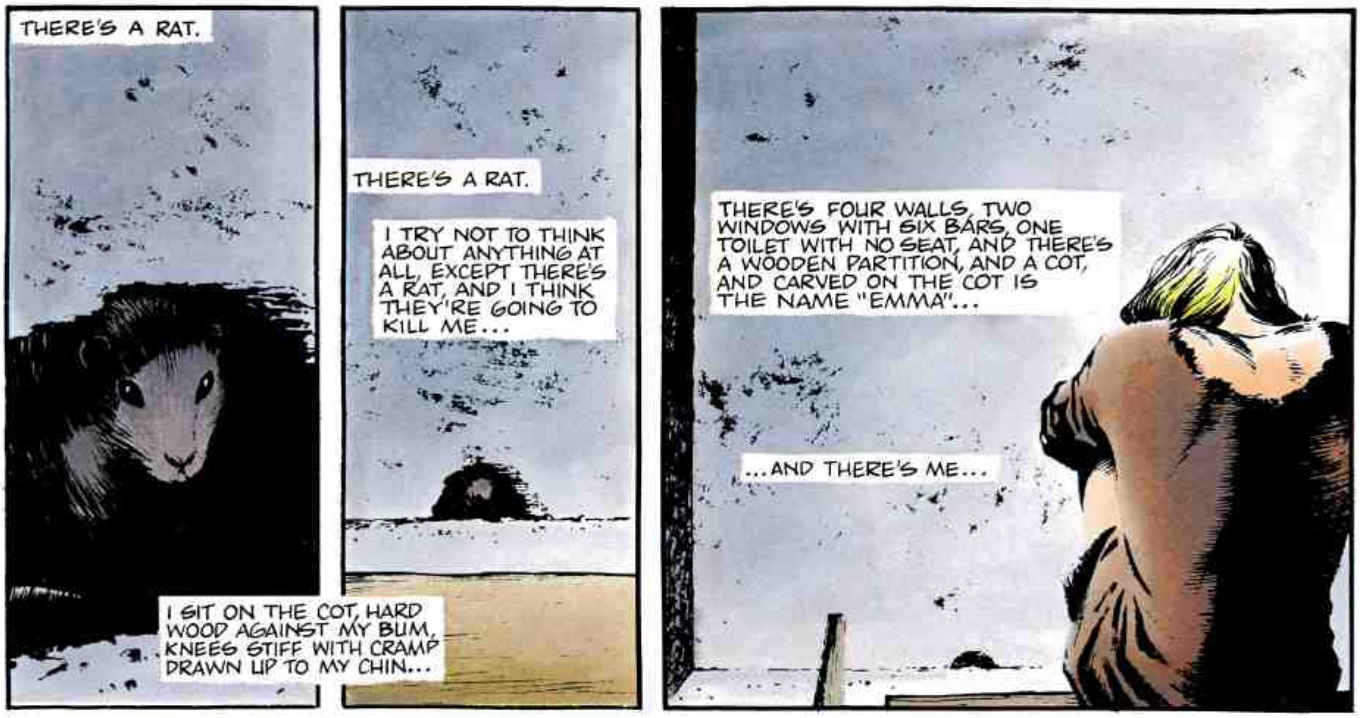
THE STAIRS REMIND ME OF SOMEWHERE ELSE, AND I FEEL SAD, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHY.
IT LOOKS LIKE I WILL GET TO THE PARTY AFTER ALL... BUT THEN DAD STEERS ME INTO ONE OF THE BEDROOMS.
HE WANTS TO SHOW ME THE SKY FROM THE WINDOW. HE SAYS IT'S YELLOW AND BLACK.
HE TELLS ME HE NEEDS MY OLD ROOM TO HIDE SOMETHING IN, BUT THAT I CAN SLEEP WITH HIM IN HERE FROM NOW ON.
THIS ROOM LOOKS FAMILIAR TOO, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHY.
HE STARTS TO KISS ME, AND WE GET INTO BED.
I WONDER IF HE'S ILL? HE LOOKS SO OLD, SUDDENLY...
THEN THE DOOR OPENS AND MY MOTHER COMES IN. I REALISE THAT I'M IN BED WITH MY FATHER AND I START TO APOLOGISE.
SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO MIND. SHE TELLS ME THAT THE PUNCH AND JUDY MAN IS ABOUT TO START.
I REALISE THAT SHE WANTS TO BE ALONE WITH DAD, SO I GO NEXT DOOR.
OUTSIDE, THE CORRIDOR LOOKS DIFFERENT. I'M CERTAIN NOW: THIS ISN'T OUR HOUSE.
BUT WHERE AM I?

SUDDENLY, I REMEMBER THAT I'M AT AN OLD FOLKS' HOME IN SOUTH KENSINGTON.
THE PUNCH AND JUDY MAN HAS BEEN ARRANGED TO ENTERTAIN THE INMATES. WHY DID I THINK IT WAS MY BIRTHDAY?
I MOVE THROUGH THE CROWD FOR A BETTER LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING ON STAGE. SOME VOLUNTEERS HAVE GONE UP FROM THE AUDIENCE...
THEY'RE STANDING IN A LINE IN FRONT OF MR PUNCH. I THINK I KNOW SOME OF THEM.
WHAT'S HE GOING TO DO?
THAT'S THE WAY TO DO IT!
OH, DEAR DEAR DEAR
WHY DOESN'T SOMEBODY STOP HIM? EVERYBODY'S JUST LAUGHING!
I RUN OFF TO FIND MY MUM AND DAD, KNOWING AS I DO SO THAT HE'S SURE TO FOLLOW ME.

I'M VERY FRIGHTENED NOW. I DON'T RECOGNISE ANY OF THE CORRIDORS, AND THE MR PUNCH-MAN WILL TURN THE CORNER BEHIND ME ANY SECOND.
I CAN HEAR MY HEART HAMMERING INSIDE ME. THERE IS NO OTHER NOISE IN THE WHOLE THEATRE.
EVERYBODY ELSE MUST BE DEAD. DAD, MUM, GORDON...
THEY'VE LEFT ME ALONE WITH HIM.
I TURN AND RUN BACK THE WAY I'VE COME, BUT THE CORRIDOR HAS GONE...
AND THERE'S A BIG FLIGHT OF SPIRAL STAIRS INSTEAD.
MY LEGS ARE HEAVY. I CAN HARDLY MOVE THEM. HE'S GOING TO CATCH ME.
I GET TO THE TOP OF THE STAIRS AND LOOK DOWN THE WELL.
HE'S COMING UP AFTER ME. ROUND AND ROUND HE GOES...

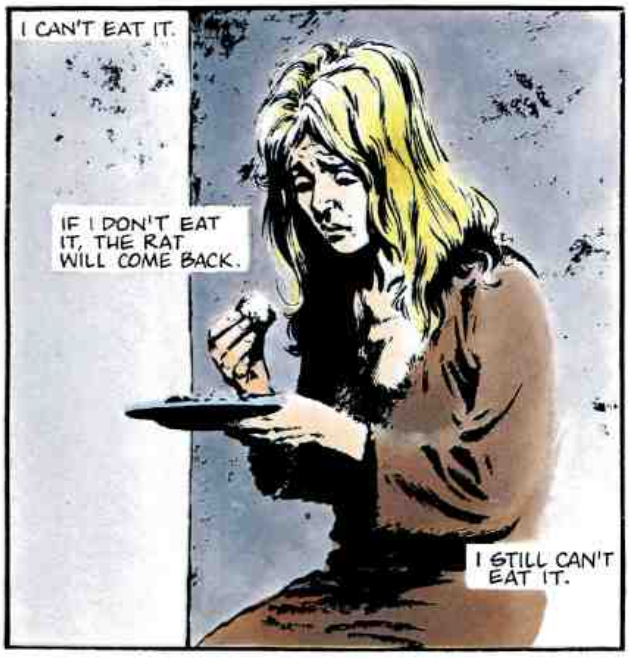
I REMEMBER THAT THERE'S A LIFT UP HERE THAT GOES ALL THE WAY DOWN TO THE BASEMENT.
I'LL NEVER GET TO IT IN TIME.
HE'S RIGHT BEHIND ME.
PLEASE DON'T LET THE DOORS SHUT BEFORE I GET TO IT.
I'M ALMOST THERE.
OH, THANK GOD.
DOWN. DOWN TO THE GROUND FLOOR. HE'LL HAVE TO TAKE THE STAIRS, AND...
AAAA

STRENGT
THROUGH
PURITY
PURITY
THROUGH
FAITH

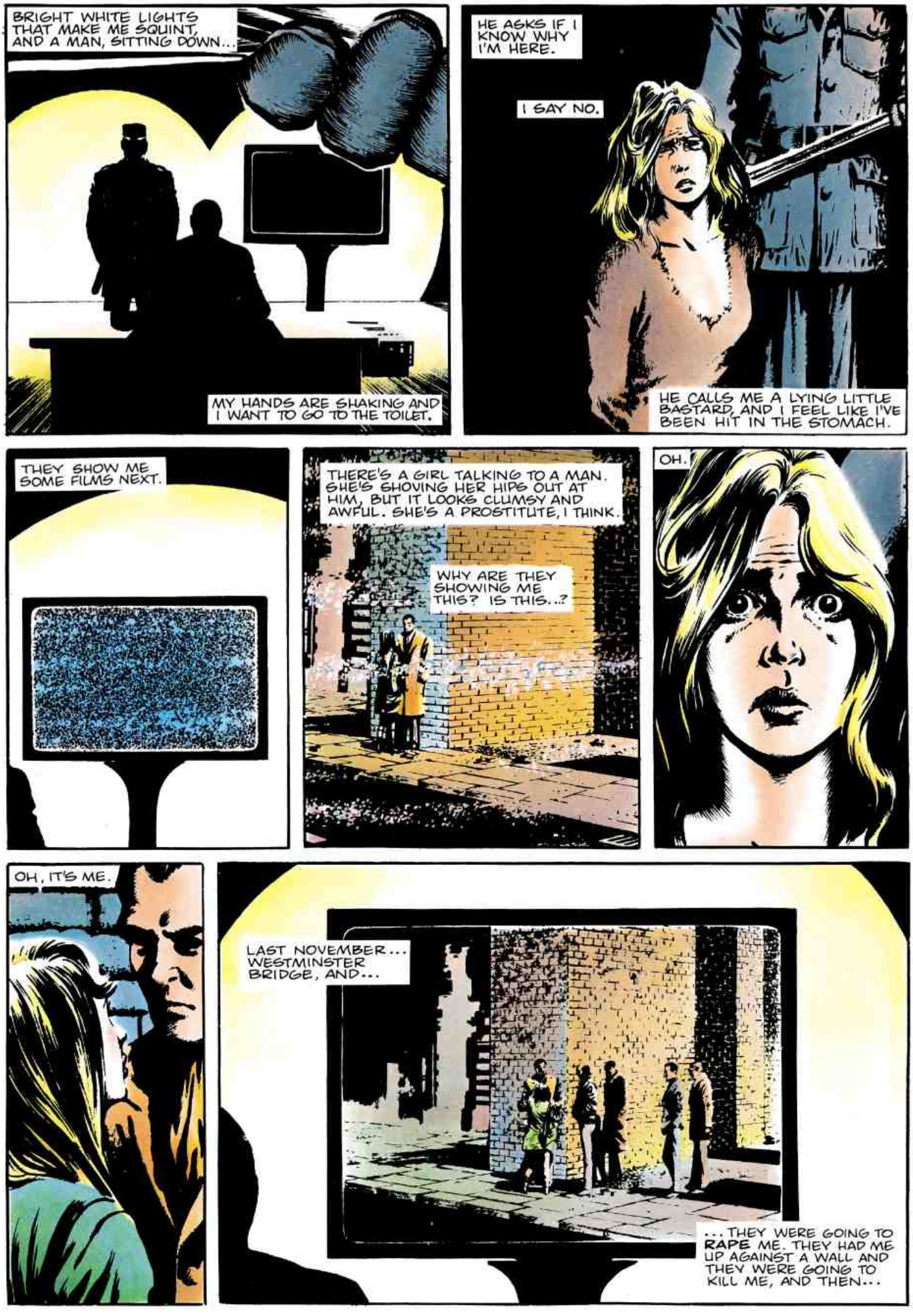

THERE'S A RAT.
I SIT ON THE COT, HARD WOOD AGAINST MY BUM, KNEES STIFF WITH CRAMP DRAWN UP TO MY CHIN...
THERE'S A RAT.
I TRY NOT TO THINK ABOUT ANYTHING AT ALL, EXCEPT THERE'S A RAT, AND I THINK THEY'RE GOING TO KILL ME...
THERE'S FOUR WALLS, TWO WINDOWS WITH SIX BARS, ONE TOILET WITH NO SEAT, AND THERE'S A WOODEN PARTITION, AND A COT, AND CARVED ON THE COT IS THE NAME "EMMA"...
...AND THERE'S ME...

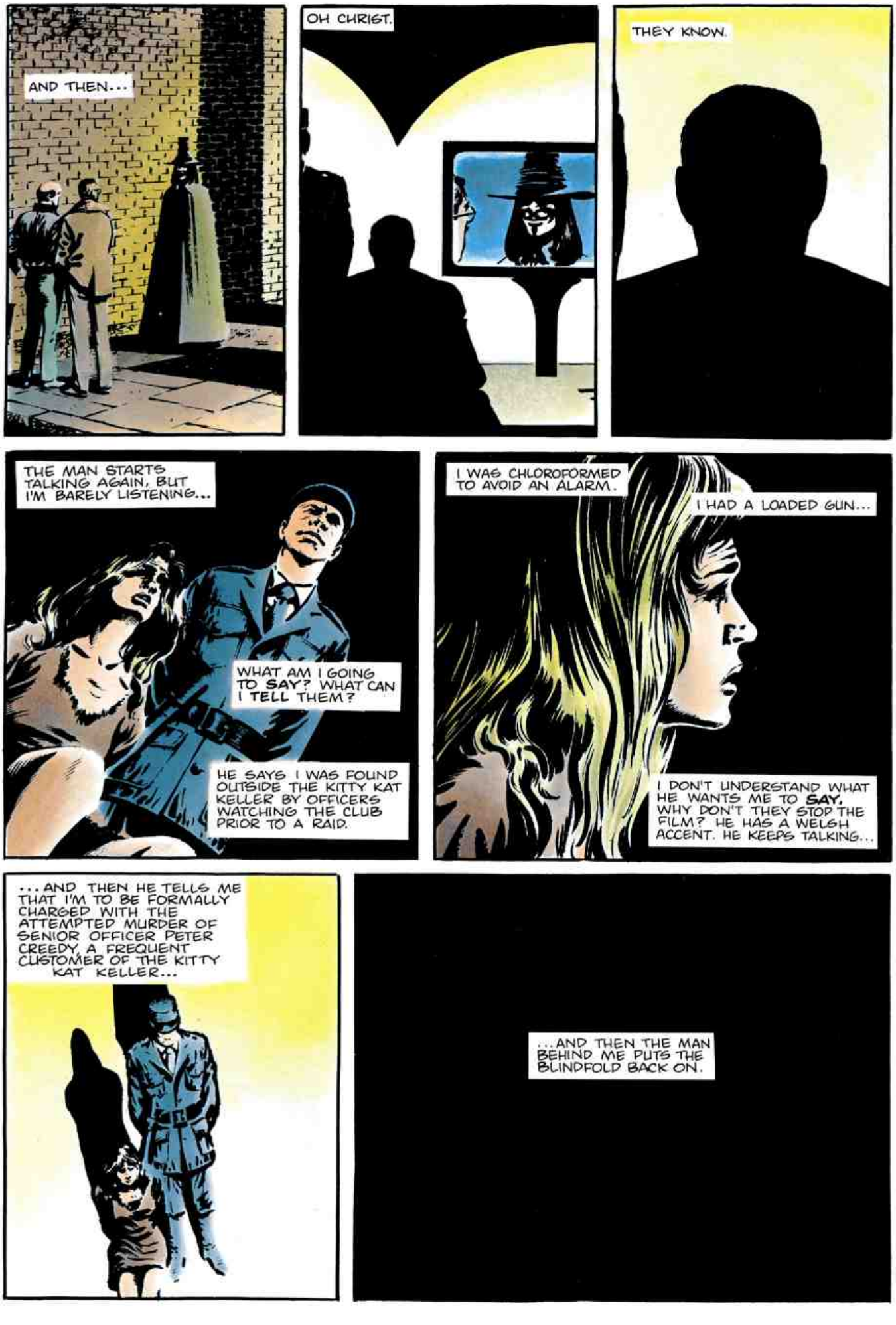
...AND THERE'S A RAT.

CHAPTER 10
VERMIN



LATER. WAKING UP, VOICES...
SHE'S ASLEEP...
LAZY LITTLE COW.
WAKEY-WAKEY, DARLIN'...
COME ON, YOU CLAPPED-OUT LITTLE PRO... MOVE IT!
PLEASE DO THE NECESSARY, ROSSITER.
SIR.
WHAT...?
MY GOD.
SO THIS SCRAWNY SPECIMEN IS THE FAMOUS MISS HAMMOND...
NO! WHERE AM I? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? I WON'T...
SHUT UP.
STOP IT! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
PLEASE, I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING. WHAT AM I HERE FOR? I...
I SAID SHUT YOUR HOLE.
WALKING. I CAN'T SEE... HANDS, PUSHING ME, HARD, IN THE BACK...
FINALLY, WE STOP.
ALRIGHT. TAKE IT OFF...

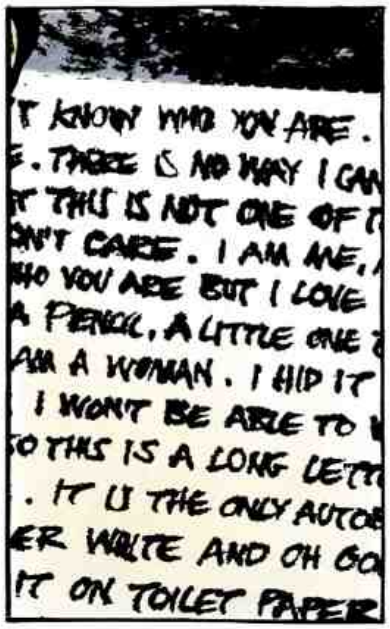

BRIGHT WHITE LIGHTS THAT MAKE ME SQUINT, AND A MAN, SITTING DOWN...
MY HANDS ARE SHAKING AND I WANT TO GO TO THE TOILET.
HE ASKS IF I KNOW WHY I'M HERE.
I SAY NO.
HE CALLS ME A LYING LITTLE BASTARD, AND I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN HIT IN THE STOMACH.
THEY SHOW ME SOME FILMS NEXT.
THERE'S A GIRL TALKING TO A MAN. SHE'S SHOVING HER HIPS OUT AT HIM, BUT IT LOOKS CLUMSY AND AWFUL. SHE'S A PROSTITUTE, I THINK.
WHY ARE THEY SHOWING ME THIS? IS THIS...?
OH.
OH, IT'S ME.
LAST NOVEMBER... WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, AND...
...THEY WERE GOING TO **RAPE** ME. THEY HAD ME UP AGAINST A WALL AND THEY WERE GOING TO KILL ME, AND THEN...


AND THEN...
OH CHRIST.
THEY KNOW.
THE MAN STARTS TALKING AGAIN, BUT I'M BARELY LISTENING...
WHAT AM I GOING TO **SAY**? WHAT CAN I **TELL** THEM?
HE SAYS I WAS FOUND OUTSIDE THE KITTY KAT KELLER BY OFFICERS WATCHING THE CLUB PRIOR TO A RAID.
I WAS CHLOROFORMED TO AVOID AN ALARM.
I HAD A LOADED GUN...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT HE WANTS ME TO **SAY.** WHY DON'T THEY STOP THE FILM? HE HAS A WELSH ACCENT. HE KEEPS TALKING...
...AND THEN HE TELLS ME THAT I'M TO BE FORMALLY CHARGED WITH THE ATTEMPTED MURDER OF SENIOR OFFICER PETER CREEDY, A FREQUENT CUSTOMER OF THE KITTY KAT KELLER...
...AND THEN THE MAN BEHIND ME PUTS THE BLINDFOLD BACK ON.

BLIND, STUMBLING, SOMEONE'S HAND ON MY WRISTS, TIGHT ENOUGH TO HURT...
WE GO SOMEWHERE. THEY PUSH ME DOWN. I SCREAM, EXPECTING TO FALL...
...BUT THERE'S A CHAIR.
SOMEONE GRABS HOLD OF MY HAIR...
WHAT ARE THEY DOING? I FEEL THEM CUTTING AT IT.
...AND THEN THERE'S SOMETHING WET...
THEY'RE...
OH NO. OH GOD...
THEY DON'T NEED TO DO THIS...
AFTER A LONG TIME, IT'S FINISHED.
A DOOR OPENS. I CAN HEAR A WOMAN'S VOICE, VERY CLOSE...
A DOCTOR? DID I HEAR SOMEONE SAY THAT?
THEY STAND ME UP, AND...
...I AM GIVEN... AN EXAMINATION...
I THINK IT'S THE WOMAN.
...AND THEN THEY TAKE ME SOMEWHERE ELSE...
...AND THEY TAKE OFF THE BLINDFOLD...
...AND THERE'S A CELL...
...AND THERE'S A RAT.

ONLY NOW, I DON'T MIND THE RAT...
...BECAUSE I'M NO BETTER.
...IT'S DARK, AND I CRY FOR A LONG TIME...
LATER, WAKING UP... OH GOD. I REMEMBER. THEY CUT OFF MY HAIR...
WHAT WOKE ME? A NOISE... RUSTLING...
THERE'S A RAT...
I GET UP. IT'S ALMOST LIGHT AND I CAN SEE THE HOLE IN THE WALL.
THERE'S SOMETHING STICKING OUT OF IT...
NOT A RAT...
TOILET PAPER?
BUT WHY...?
THERE ARE FIVE PAGES, WRITTEN IN PENCIL.
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE. PLEASE BELIEVE. THERE IS NO WAY I CAN CONVINCE YOU THAT THIS IS NOT ONE OF THEIR TRICKS BUT I DON'T CARE. I AM ME, AND I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE BUT I LOVE YOU. I HAVE A PENCIL, A LITTLE ONE THEY DID NOT FIND. I AM A WOMAN. I HID IT INSIDE ME PERHAPS I WON'T BE ABLE TO WRITE AGAIN, SO THIS IS A LONG LETTER ABOUT MY LIFE. IT IS THE ONLY AUTOBIOGRAPHY I WILL EVER WRITE AND OH GOD I'M WRITING IT ON TOILET PAPER.
I LOOK AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LAST PAGE FIRST.
HER NAME IS VALERIE...

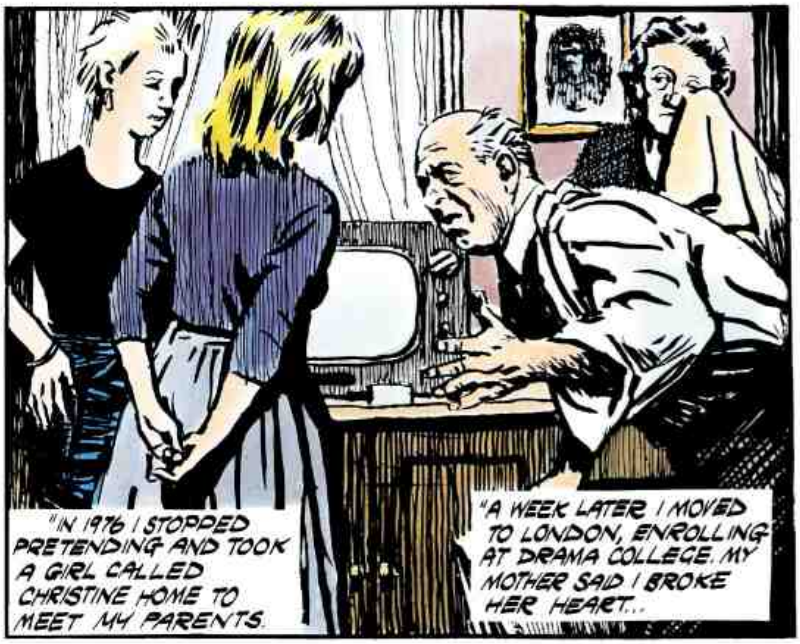
I KNOW EVERY INCH OF THIS CELL. I KNOW EVERY PITTED INDENTATION IN THE ROUGH PLASTER LIKE I KNOW MY OWN BODY.
I DON'T KNOW WHERE I AM.
I KNOW IT GETS DARK AND THEN LIGHT; THAT I WAKE, THEN SLEEP; THAT TIME PASSES MEASURED IN HAIR GROWING BACK BENEATH MY ARMS WHERE THEY WON'T LET ME SHAVE...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT DAY IT IS.
I KNOW THAT THERE'S A WOMAN WHO WROTE ME A LETTER ON TOILET PAPER. I KNOW SHE'S ALONE. I KNOW THAT SHE LOVES ME.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE LOOKS LIKE.
I READ HER LETTER, I HIDE IT, I SLEEP, I WAKE, THEY QUESTION ME, I CRY, IT GETS DARK, IT GETS LIGHT, I READ HER LETTER AGAIN...
...OVER AND OVER...
HER NAME'S VALERIE...
CHAPTER II
VALERIE

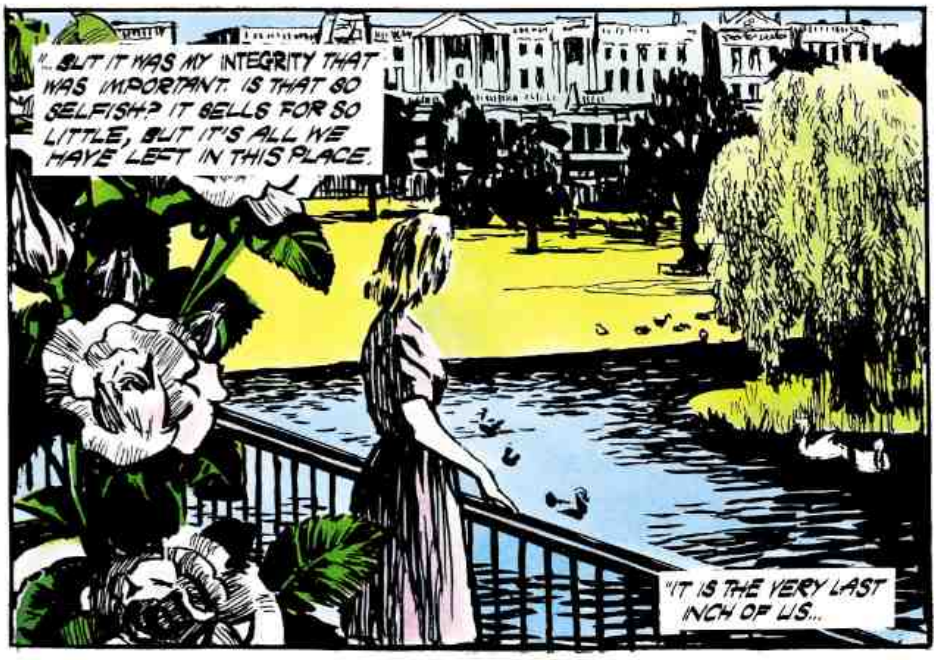

T KNOW WHO YOU ARE.
E. THERE IS NO WAY I CA
T THIS IS NOT ONE OF
ON'T CARE. I AM ME,
HO YOU ARE BUT I LOVE
A PENCIL, A LITTLE ONE
AM A WOMAN. I HID IT
I WON'T BE ABLE TO
O THIS IS A LONG LET
. IT IS THE ONLY AUTO
ER WRITE AND OH GO
IT ON TOILET PAPER

"I WAS BORN IN NOTTINGHAM IN 1957, AND IT RAINED A LOT. I PASSED MY ELEVEN PLUS AND WENT TO GIRL'S GRAMMAR. I WANTED TO BE AN ACTRESS.
"I MET MY FIRST GIRLFRIEND AT SCHOOL.

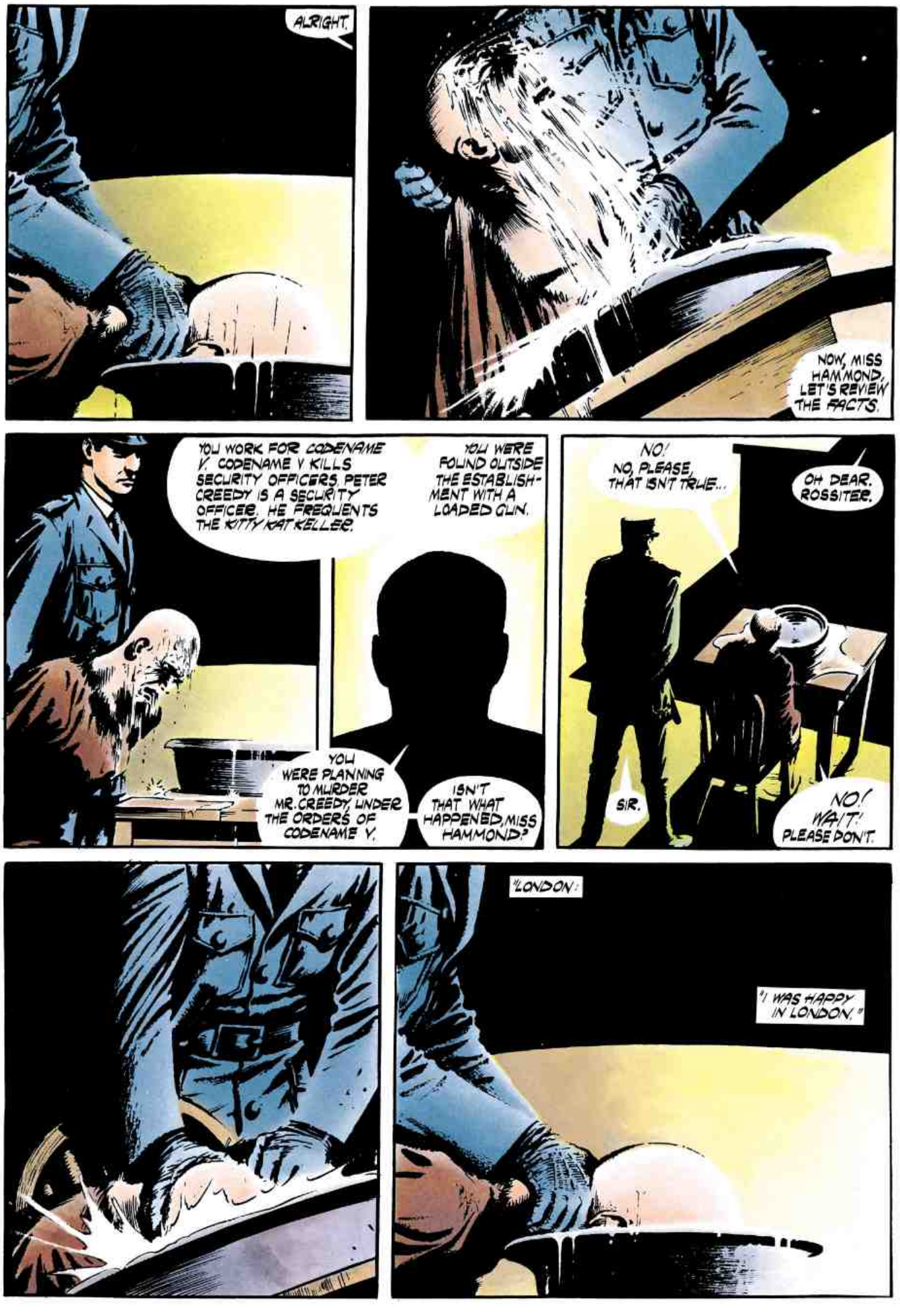
"HER NAME WAS SARA. SHE WAS FOURTEEN AND I WAS FIFTEEN BUT WE WERE BOTH IN MISS WATSON'S CLASS.
"HER WRISTS. HER WRISTS WERE BEAUTIFUL.

"I SAT IN BIOLOGY CLASS, STARING AT THE PICKLED RABBIT FOETUS IN ITS JAR, LISTENING WHILE MR. HIRD SAID IT WAS AN ADOLESCENT PHASE THAT PEOPLE OUTGREW...
"SARA DID. I DIDN'T.

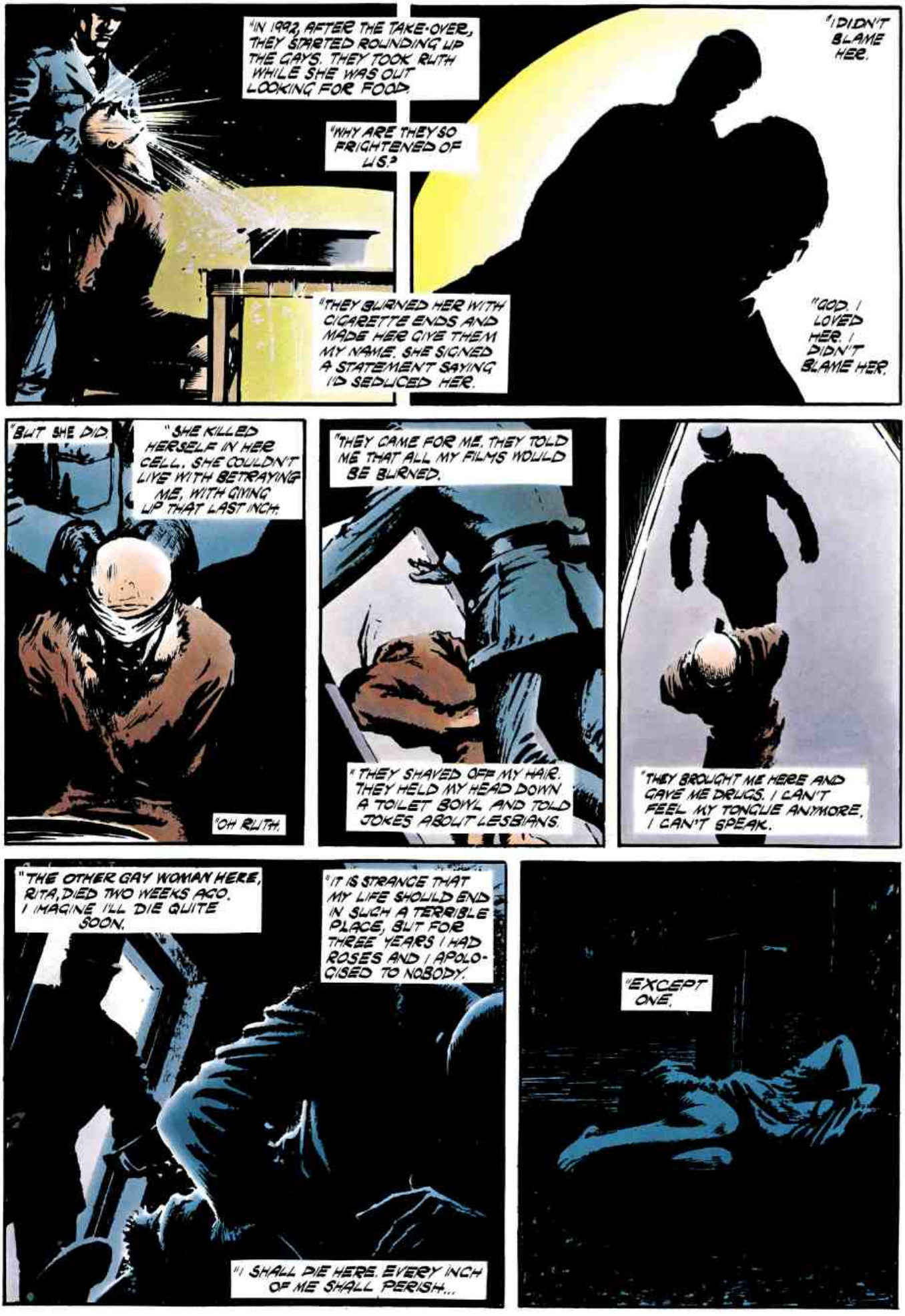

"IN 1976 I STOPPED PRETENDING AND TOOK A GIRL CALLED CHRISTINE HOME TO MEET MY PARENTS.
"A WEEK LATER I MOVED TO LONDON, ENROLLING AT DRAMA COLLEGE. MY MOTHER SAID I BROKE HER HEART...

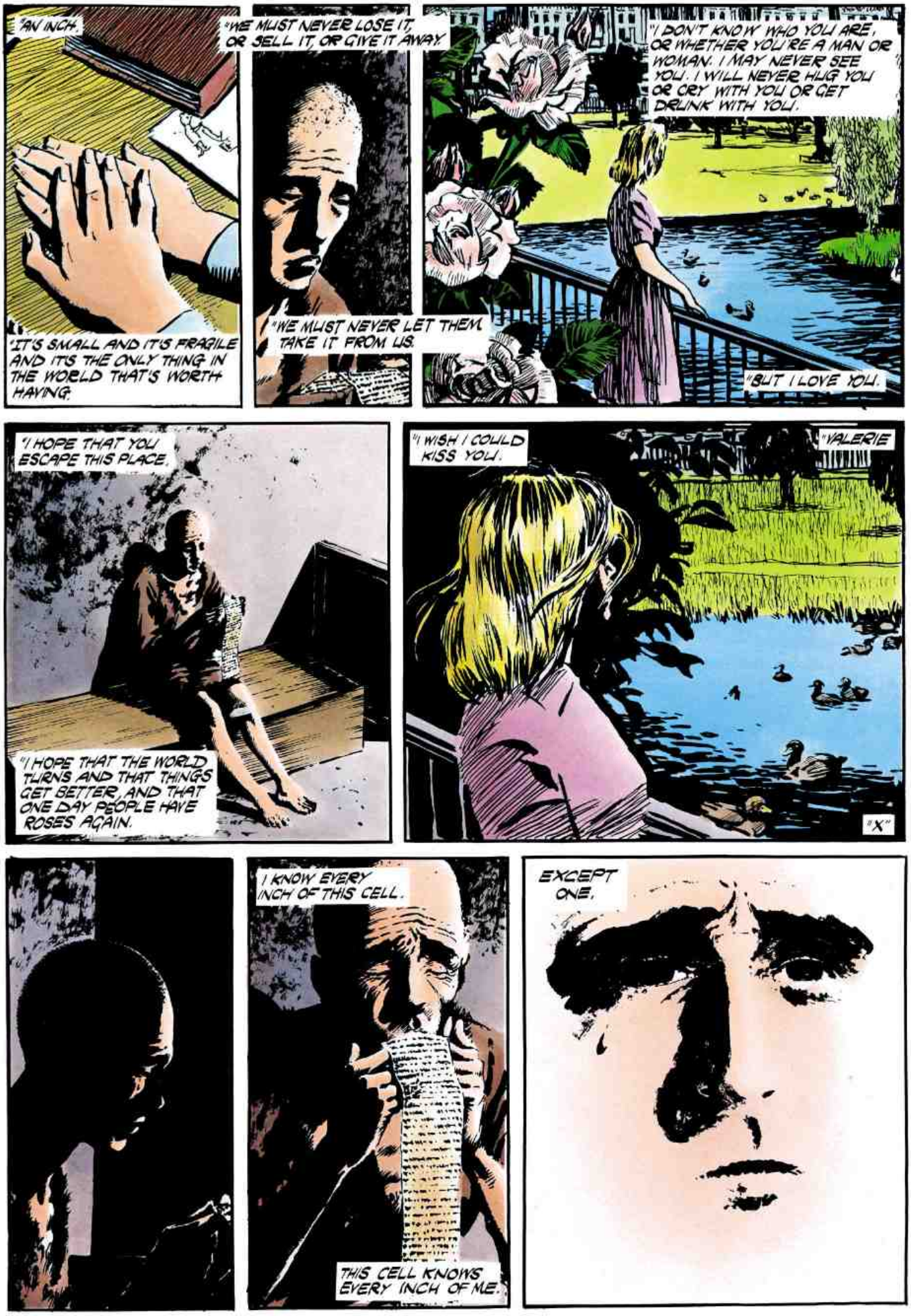

"...BUT IT WAS MY INTEGRITY THAT WAS IMPORTANT. IS THAT SO SELFISH? IT SELLS FOR SO LITTLE, BUT IT'S ALL WE HAVE LEFT IN THIS PLACE.
"IT IS THE VERY LAST INCH OF US...

"...BUT WITHIN THAT INCH WE ARE FREE."


ALRIGHT.
NOW, MISS HAMMOND, LET'S REVIEW THE FACTS.
YOU WORK FOR CODENAME Y. CODENAME Y KILLS SECURITY OFFICERS. PETER CREEDY IS A SECURITY OFFICER. HE FREQUENTS THE KITTY KAT KELLER.
YOU WERE FOUND OUTSIDE THE ESTABLISHMENT WITH A LOADED GUN.
YOU WERE PLANNING TO MURDER MR. CREEDY UNDER THE ORDERS OF CODENAME Y.
ISN'T THAT WHAT HAPPENED, MISS HAMMOND?
NO! NO, PLEASE, THAT ISN'T TRUE...
OH DEAR. ROSSITER.
SIR.
NO! WAIT! PLEASE DON'T.
"LONDON:
"I WAS HAPPY IN LONDON."

FOR SO LITTLE, BUT IT'S ALL WE HAVE LEFT IN THIS PLACE. IT IS THE VERY LAST INCH OF US
BUT WITHIN THAT INCH WE ARE FREE.
LONDON: I WAS HAPPY IN LONDON. IN FT8! I PLAYED DANDINI IN CINDERELLA. MY FIRST REP WORK. THE WORLD WAS STRANGE AND RUSTLING AND BUSY, WITH INVISIBLE CROWDS BEHIND THE HOT LIGHTS AND ALL THAT BREATHLESS GLAMOUR. IT WAS EXCITING AND IT WAS LONELY. AT NIGHTS I'D GO TO GARSTON'S OR ONE OF THE OTHER CLUBS, BUT I WAS STAND-OFFISH AND DIDN'T MIX EASILY. I SAW A LOT OF THE SCENE, BUT I NEVER FELT COMFORTABLE: THERE SO MANY OF THEM JUST WANTING TO BE GAY. IT WAS THEIR LIFE, THEIR AMBITION. ALL THEY TALKED ABOUT.
"... AND I WANTED MORE THAN THAT.
"WORK IMPROVED. I GOT SMALL FILM ROLES, THEN BIGGER ONES.
"IN 1986 I STARRED IN 'THE SALT FLATS.' IT PULLED IN THE AWARDS BUT NOT THE CROWDS.
"I MET RUTH WHILE WORKING ON THAT.
"WE LOVED EACH OTHER.
"WE LIVED TOGETHER, AND ON VALENTINE'S DAY SHE SENT ME ROSES, AND OH GOD, WE HAD SO MUCH.
"THOSE WERE THE BEST THREE YEARS OF MY LIFE.
"IN 1988 THERE WAS THE WAR...
"...AND AFTER THAT THERE WERE NO MORE ROSES.
"NOT FOR ANYBODY.


"IN 1992, AFTER THE TAKE-OVER, THEY STARTED ROUNDING UP THE GAYS. THEY TOOK RUTH WHILE SHE WAS OUT LOOKING FOR FOOD.
"WHY ARE THEY SO FRIGHTENED OF US?
"I DIDN'T BLAME HER.
"THEY BURNED HER WITH CIGARETTE ENDS AND MADE HER GIVE THEM MY NAME. SHE SIGNED A STATEMENT SAYING I'D SEDUCED HER.
"GOD, I LOVED HER. I DIDN'T BLAME HER.
"BUT SHE DID.
"SHE KILLED HERSELF IN HER CELL. SHE COULDN'T LIVE WITH BETRAYING ME, WITH GIVING UP THAT LAST INCH.
"OH RUTH.
"THEY CAME FOR ME. THEY TOLD ME THAT ALL MY FILMS WOULD BE BURNED.
"THEY SHAVED OFF MY HAIR. THEY HELD MY HEAD DOWN A TOILET BOWL AND TOLD JOKES ABOUT LESBIANS.
"THEY BROUGHT ME HERE AND GAVE ME DRUGS. I CAN'T FEEL MY TONGUE ANYMORE, I CAN'T SPEAK.
"THE OTHER GAY WOMAN HERE, RITA, DIED TWO WEEKS AGO. I IMAGINE I'LL DIE QUITE SOON.
"IT IS STRANGE THAT MY LIFE SHOULD END IN SUCH A TERRIBLE PLACE, BUT FOR THREE YEARS I HAD ROSES AND I APOLOGISED TO NOBODY.
"I SHALL DIE HERE. EVERY INCH OF ME SHALL PERISH...
"EXCEPT ONE.


"AN INCH.
"IT'S SMALL AND IT'S FRAGILE AND IT'S THE ONLY THING IN THE WORLD THAT'S WORTH HAVING.
"WE MUST NEVER LOSE IT, OR SELL IT, OR GIVE IT AWAY.
"WE MUST NEVER LET THEM TAKE IT FROM US.
"I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, OR WHETHER YOU'RE A MAN OR WOMAN. I MAY NEVER SEE YOU. I WILL NEVER HUG YOU OR CRY WITH YOU OR GET DRUNK WITH YOU.
"BUT I LOVE YOU.
"I HOPE THAT YOU ESCAPE THIS PLACE.
"I HOPE THAT THE WORLD TURNS AND THAT THINGS GET BETTER, AND THAT ONE DAY PEOPLE HAVE ROSES AGAIN.
"I WISH I COULD KISS YOU.
"VALERIE
"X"
I KNOW EVERY INCH OF THIS CELL.
THIS CELL KNOWS EVERY INCH OF ME.
EXCEPT ONE.

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ZOMBIE